



The LongPath

A North Alabama DX Club Publication

Special points of interest:

- From the President
- March Program
- January Minutes
- An Antenna Tale
- DX Contests for January
- W1AW/4 (TN)

How to Join

- * Come to a club meeting;
- * or send in an application by mail (form on www.NADXC.org)
- * or call Tom Duncan at (256)705-2147

From the President

By Mark Brown, N4BCD

Well, for me it's been a memorable month for DX'ing. Picked up VK9MT on 10m after work one night and anticipated some additional bands but unfortunately their trip was cut short due to bad weather.

There are a few other new band/countries in the log too but effort was needed on another task - activating W1AW/4 during Tennessee's week in March. Being DX was like nothing I'd ever imagined. Later in the issue is an article attempting to capture the intensity & sheer fun at working those pile-ups.

I'm pleased to announce that Bob Allphin K4UEE has formally accepted our invitation as guest speaker at this year's DX Banquet on Saturday night of the Huntsville Hamfest. Your fellow officers & directors are working on determining the new banquet location following the winter closure of the Holiday Inn. We should have something soon.

Also in this issue is a list (thanks Chuck N4NM) of DXpeditions we might consider for sponsorship. We all benefit from their efforts so please give some thought & consideration to who we might choose to help out this year.

This being April, I'll add that I picked up some of that unidirectional coax listed in the new products section of QST. Hooked it up backwards and blew the finals. Oh, and I worked P5AA.

73,
Mark

The LongPath Staff

Publisher/Editor:

Tom Duncan, KG4CUY

Departments:

Chuck Lewis, N4NM, DX Contests

Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK, Minutes

Mark Brown, N4BCD, From the President

DXpeditions of 2013

Program by Mark Brown N4BCD

Mark N4BCD will highlight the notable DXpeditions of 2013 and provide a short state-by-state breakdown on the 1st quarter of W1AW portable operations.

See you at Po' Boy Factory around 6:00 pm Tuesday for dinner, 7:00 for the business meeting, and 7:30 for the program.



Who could have imagined how popular this weekly state by state activation of W1AW would be? Each week we're treated to new DXpeditions where nearly every state is really 59.

After relocating barely across the border from Alabama to Tennessee I sought out the Tennessee Contest Group inquiring how one might be able to operate in the event. In the months leading up to TN's activation, emails kept folks apprised of the planning and in due course a schedule emerged listing days / times / modes & operator callsigns. Special thanks to Ned K1GU for his outstanding organization and clarity of communications.

The first couple of schedules had no callsigns in slots where other states had huge pile-ups and with some trepidation I signed up to lead off TN's week with 2 hours on 40m Phone then move to 80m for 2 more hours. On other days I picked some other band / time slots that fit with my work schedule.

A little digression. I got back in the hobby a short 5 years ago from a 35 year hiatus. I remember clearly one day talking to an active ham about the changes that occurred since my Novice days. His short dissertation about rigs controlled by computers, software defined radios, new communication modes and more made my jaw drop. I took the exams, bought an FT-950, and started building wire antennas and making contacts. My last CW QSO was 35 years ago. For now I'm still a phone guy. One morning I got on the radio and answered a call to an Op who wanted a serial number.

Didn't think it was the one on the back of the '950 so I asked him what he needed. Of course he got a 001 and then it was off to the internet to learn about Radiosport. DX contests seemed like the quickest path to DXCC so I entered as many as time would allow. Eventually got proficient enough to be noticed by local testers and was invited to work a station at K4BFT 4A Field Day. It's a serious effort with yearly 1st place finishes and I'm forever indebted to the tutoring of Larry K4AB for improving my run performance. A casual tester with an occasional

serious effort describes me.

A few weeks away from TN activation it was time to tweak the low band antenna as I'd noticed that my 130' ladder-line fed doublet broadside NE was not first call good enough for Washington & Idaho during their activations. A chat with friend and antenna guru Tom N4KG confirmed my hunch that another 40m dipole oriented NW would be the ticket. I also used the weeks preceding the activation to listen for how others did it. Consistency. "W1AW Portable 4" at the end of EVERY QSO. Pick out partials. Say "Again". Those 3 lines and "59 Tennessee" were printed in large text - the only paper on my operating desk. I penciled in the reminder <listen for DX> somewhere along the way.

On Tuesday of TN's activation I frequently wondered if I'd bitten off more than I could chew. The opening night pile-ups were overwhelming some state's ops. Home from work and too nervous to eat I settled into the shack to make sure all was ready (N1MM and all amp / tuner settings were done the night before). At 0000 I self spotted at 7.243 and had a call on the first CQ.

Within a minute the pile-up was a full blown roar. It's difficult to put into words what the sound of hundreds of phonetics & numbers arriving at one's ears sounds like. Yet out of it full callsigns emerged and if not there was always a partial.

It was apparent I was loud enough that called stations consistently heard me so I never considered splitting and the rate meter was a solid bar at the top of the window. This is what a Dodge Neon must feel like on the Autobahn trying to keep up with the big dogs.

At the conclusion of those first two hours it was time for a breather and another tumbler of water. Holy cow. 342 Qs, 173.9/hr in 2 hours. Revitalized I re-tuned the doublet for 80m and was off on another 2 hour run. Almost as good with 295 Qs, 169.1/hr. A new personal best and I breathed a sigh of relief as the log was emailed in and the station was secured for the night.

One thing I never anticipated was the

adrenalin rush that came with having such intense fun for so long. It was hours later that I managed to fall asleep.

Evening two was spent on 20m with the A3S mostly pointed NW for all of NA and the occasional loud European. In hindsight it might have been beneficial to aim NE to capture more EU's but the rate spoke for itself - 317 Q's in 2 hours.

Evening three was back to 40m and the best rate yet - 192 Q's/hour. I was beginning to get comfortable with the tremendous wall of callers.

Over the next several evenings I added slots on other bands including 6m and even handed out a few simplex Q's on 2m. It didn't compare to those first few nights on the low bands when it seemed like most of the FCC callsign database wanted to be in the log.

A word or two about the callers. Patient, respectful, and almost grateful sounding to be in the log. Except for an occasional tuner-upper that auto-notch took care of I had ZERO problems. In one instance some 40m guys asked me to move down 1. No problem.

On the final evening of Tennessee's week, I left work early to grab one hour on 10m then wrap up one hour on 40m. The 10m log showed about an even split between JA's and domestics but the rate here and on 40m was only a third of the beginning nights.

My wife Julie KK4CLG and I visited Aruba a few years ago at Christmas and made unannounced visits to "homes with aluminum" where we were welcomed each time. I've often wondered what it would be like on the other end of a P40 contest or DXpedition pile-up in some far off locale. Now I know. And I didn't need to leave the farm to find out. It's something every ham should experience at least once.

Don't let this opportunity to "be the DX" pass you by. Sign up to operate W1AW in your state for the bands & mode of your choice. Call CQ & hang on!

DX Contests for April

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

LZ Open 40 Meter Dx Contest, (CW), 40M

Apr. 5, 0400Z to April 5, 0800Z

Exchange: 3-digit serial no. and serial from previous QSO

See, page 82, April QST and www.lzopen.com

EA RTTY Contest, (RTTY), 80-10M

Apr. 5, 1600Z to Apr. 6, 1600Z

Exchange: RST plus serial

See page 82, Apr. QST and www.ure.es/contest

SP DX Contest, (CW & SSB), 80-10M

Apr. 5, 1500Z to Apr. 6, 1500Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus serial or SP province

See page 82, Apr. QST and www.spdxcontest.pzk.org.pl

EU Spring Sprints, (CW), 80-20M

Apr. 12, 1600Z to 1959Z

Exchange: Both calls, Serial number, your name.

See page 82, Apr. QST. and www.eu-sprint.com

OK/OM Dx Contest, (SSB), (160-10M)

Apr. 12, 1200Z to Apr. 13, 1200Z

Exchange: RS plus serial; OK/OM send RS plus county code (3 letters)

See: okomdx.crk.cz

Yuri Gagarin International DX Contest, (CW), 160-10M

Apr. 12, 2100Z to Apr. 13, 2100Z

Exchange: RST, ITU zone

See Page 82, Apr. QST and gc.qst.ru/en

Japan Int'l. DX CW Contest (CW), (160-10M)

Apr. 12, 0700Z to Apr. 13, 1300Z

Exchange: RST plus CQ zone; JAs send RST plus prefecture

See page 82, Apr. QST and <http://www.jidx.org>

EU Spring Sprints, (SSB), 80-20M

Apr. 19, 1600Z to 1959Z

Exchange: Both calls, Serial number, your name

See page 82, Apr. QST and www.eu-sprint.com

YU DX Contest (CW), 160-10M

Apr. 19, 2100Z to Apr 20, 1700Z see website for times

Exchange: RST plus serial

See www.yudx.yu1srs.org.rs/2013/rules.html

ES Open HF Championship, (CW & SSB), 80 & 40M

Apr 19, 0500Z to 0859Z

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial #

Note: Dupes OK once per hour

See Page 82, April QST and www.erau.ee

Helvetia Contest, (CW, SSB, Dig.), 160-10M

Apr. 26, 1300Z to Apr. 27, 1259

Exchange: RS(T) plus Serial # or Swiss canton

See Page 82, Apr. QST and www.uska.ch

SP DX RTTY Contest, (RTTY), 80-10M

Apr. 26, 1200Z to Apr. 27, 1200Z

Exchange: RST, plus Serial # or SP province

See Page 82, Apr. QST and www.pkrvg.org



OTHERS:

EA QRP Contest,

April 19, 1700Z to April 20, 1300Z

CQMM DX Contest,

April 19, 1200Z to April 20, 2359Z

Holyland DX Contest,

April 19, 2100Z to Apr. 20, 2100Z

TARA Skirmish Digital Prefix Contest,

0000Z-2359Z, Apr 19

ARI International DX Contest

1200Z, May 3 to 1959Z, May 4

Dates & times often change or are misprinted in the journals; beware.

Chuck, N4NM

Which DXpeditions Will We Support?

By Chuck Lewis, N4NM

The NADXC will soon need to decide where to send our donations in support of DXpeditions. There are (at least) two sources of information that can help: the NG3K website has a rather complete list of anticipated DXpeditions, and the Club Log website has all current DXCC entities ranked in order of most-needed by Club Log users.

If we combine the NG3K "Announced DX Operations" for 2014 with the Club Log "Most Needed" list, we can narrow things down a bit. The chart below does just that, with the announced DX operations sorted according to need (as determined by ClubLog). There's more detail in the online versions of both lists, but this chart should help us decide which DXpeditions to support, or perhaps which ones to research in more depth. Some of these are complete as of April 2014, but might deserve after-the-fact consideration; they are listed separately.

COMPLETED DXPEDITIONS IN TOP 100

RANK	DATE	ENTITY & NOTES
6	Feb	Amsterdam <u>FT5ZM</u> : (QRT) 170K QSOs;
22	Mar	Mellish <u>VK9MT</u> : (QRT) 34K+ QSOs
41	Mar	Andaman <u>VU4K</u> : (QRT) 7700+ QSOs
42	Feb	Annobon <u>3C0BYP</u> : (QRT) 13K+ QSOs
62	Mar	Austral <u>TX6G</u> : (QRT) 7700+ QSOs
66	Mar	Christmas <u>VK9X/K7CQ</u> : (QRT) 8.6K QSOs
67	Mar	Chatham <u>ZL7/OE2SNL</u> : (QRT) 4000 Qs
67	Mar	Chatham <u>ZL7AAA</u> : (QRT) 22K QSOs

PENDING DXPEDITIONS RANKED AS TOP 100

RANK	DATE	ENTITY & NOTES
9	Oct (2 weeks)	Tromelin <u>FT4TA</u> : F5UX, FM5CD, F5CWU, F5SIH, F4AJQ, F5ROP; QSL TBA
29	Jul (1 week)	Cocos <u>VK9C</u> : five JAs (see Christmas); 160M – 6M; LOTW, OQRS
44	Sep (3 weeks)	Tristan <u>ZD9TT</u> : CW & SSB all bands; 20M RTTY; Italian team; LOTW, OQRS
55	Apr (2 weeks)	Am. Samoa By DL2AWG, DL6JGN, PA3EWP; 40M-10M; CW/SSB/RTTY; QSL via DL2AWG
55	Jul (2 weeks)	Am. Samoa W7GJ solo; mostly 6M EME; some SSB & CW; QSL direct
55	Oct (1 week)	Am. Samoa <u>KH8B</u> solo; 160M-10M; Hex-beam & dipole; QRV for CQWW SSB; LOTW, OQRS
56	Sep (2 weeks)	Nauru <u>C21GC</u> ; 160M – 10M; CW, SSB, some RTTY; OQRS
63	Oct (3 weeks)	Lord Howe <u>VK9DLX</u> : Large DL team (Lagunaria DX Group); QRV for CQWW SSB; QSL TBA
64	Oct (2 weeks)	Macao Callsign TBD: EA team (5); 2 weeks; QRV for CQWW SSB; QSL via EB7DX
66	Aug (1 week)	Christmas <u>VK9X</u> : five JAs (see Cocos); 160M – 6M; CW, SSB, FM, RTTY; LOTW, OQRS
75	Oct (2 weeks)	West Kiribati <u>T30D</u> ; large DL team; 160M – 6M; 4 simultaneous 500W stns;
85	May (2 weeks)	Micronesia <u>V650XG</u> ; JA1XGI solo; 40M – 10M; CW, SSB, RTTY; Clublog, OQRS
87	Apr (2 weeks)	Ogasawara <u>JD1AAI</u> ; CW; QRV for JIDX CW; QSL direct
87	Apr (1 week)	Ogasawara

		JD1BLY solo; 40M – 10M; CW, SSB
87	Apr (2 weeks)	Ogasawara <u>JD1BMH</u> solo; 40M – 10M; CW, SSB, RTTY
87	May (2 weeks)	Ogasawara <u>JD1YBT</u> ; all bands/modes; LOTW
96	Apr (3 weeks)	Tonga GM3OWJ and GM4YXI; 160M – 10M; CW, SSB, RTTY; LOTW
96	Aug (2 weeks)	Tonga Callsign TBD; five W8s; 160M – 10M; SSB, CW, RTTY, PSK; 2 weeks; QSL TBA
100	Apr (4 days)	Fiji <u>3D2SE</u> ; ZL3TE solo; mostly CW, some digital; LOTW

Please remember that this stuff changes like the weather! This writer's fingers make mistakes, too! If you want to check for the latest DXpedition updates or to get more detail, go to <http://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html>. For the complete most-needed list go to <http://www.clublog.org/mostwanted.php>.

Chuck, N4NM

NADXC Officers and Directors

President	Mark Brown, N4BCD
Vice President	Warren Alford, KJ4RAQ
Secretary/ Treasurer	Bill Bathgate, KD8IGK
At-large directors	Chuck Lewis, N4NM Tom Duncan, KG4CUY Kevin Hibbs, KG4TEI
Webmaster	Mike Werner, KF4BOG